

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property
Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
18 March 2004 (18.03.2004)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2004/023014 A3

(51) International Patent Classification⁷: **E21B 19/16**

(21) International Application Number:
PCT/US2003/025716

(22) International Filing Date: 18 August 2003 (18.08.2003)

(25) Filing Language: English

(26) Publication Language: English

(30) Priority Data:
60/412,371 9 September 2002 (09.09.2002) US

(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **ENVEN-
TURE GLOBAL TECHNOLOGY** [US/US]; 16200 A Park
Row, Houston, TX 77084 (US).

(72) Inventors; and

(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): **COSTA, Scott**
[US/US]; 2011 Willow Point, Kingwood, TX 77330 (US).
RING, Lev [US/US]; 14126 Heatherhill Place, Houston,
TX 77077 (US). **MENCHACA, Jose** [US/US]; 9800
Pagewood Lane, Number 210, Houston, TX 77042 (US).

(74) Agent: **MATTINGLY, Todd**; Haynes and Boone, LLP,
1000 Louisiana, Suite 4300, Houston, TX 77002-5012
(US).

(81) Designated States (national): AE, AG, AI, AM, AT, AU,
AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU,
CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH,
GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC,
LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW,
MX, MZ, NO, NZ, OM, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SC, SD, SE,
SG, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ,
VC, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States (regional): ARIPO patent (GH, GM,
KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW),
Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM),
European patent (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE,
ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, RO,
SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM,
GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Declaration under Rule 4.17:

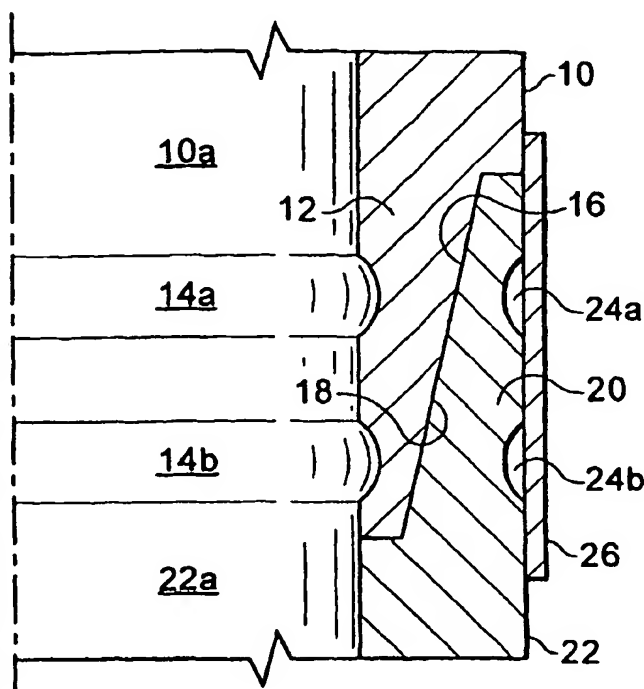
— of inventorship (Rule 4.17(iv)) for US only

Published:

— with international search report
— before the expiration of the time limit for amending the
claims and to be republished in the event of receipt of
amendments

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: **THREADED CONNECTION FOR EXPANDABLE TUBULARS**



(57) Abstract: A threaded connection for expandable tubulars. There is a first tubular (10) with external threads (16) and a second tubular (22) with matching internal threads. Each of these tubular has stress concentration grooves (14a, 14b, 24a, 24b). There is a sleeve (26) that goes over the connection between the threaded portions of the tubulars. After connection these tubulars can be expanded down-hole in a wellbore.

WO 2004/023014 A3



(88) Date of publication of the international search report:
3 March 2005

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(15) Information about Correction:

Previous Correction:

see PCT Gazette No. 41/2004 of 7 October 2004, Section II

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/US03/25716

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER		
IPC(7) : E21B 19/16		
US CL : 166/380, 207; 285/333		
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
B. FIELDS SEARCHED		
Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)		
U.S. : 166/380, 207, 381, 382, 206; 285/333, 334; 403/297		
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched		
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)		
Please See Continuation Sheet		
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 5,924,745 A (Campbell) 20 July 1999 (20.07.1999), figures 3 and 4, column 3, lines 9 - column 4, line 27.	1, 3-5, 7-9, 11, 12, 15, 17-21
Y	SU 1,756,531 A (KRYZHANOVSKI et al) 28 March 1990 (28.03.1990), Figure 1, abstract.	1, 3-5, 7-9, 11, 12, 15, 17-21
Y	WO 99/23354 (METCALFE) 14 May 1999 (14.05.1999), figure 5, page 11 lines 23-28.	1, 3-5, 7-9, 11, 12, 15, 17-21
A, E	US 6,622,797 B2 (SIVLEY IV) 23 September 2003 (23.09.2003), whole document.	1-12, 15-21
A, E	US 6,607,220 B2 (SIVLEY, IV) 19 August 2003 (19.08.2003), whole document.	1-12, 15-21
A, P	US 6,564,875 B1 (BULLOCK) 20 May 2003 (20.05.2003), whole document.	1-12, 15-21
A	US 2002/0108756 A1 (HARRALL et al) 15 August 2002 (15.06.2002), whole document.	1-12, 15-21
A	US 6,322,109 B1 (CAMPBELL et al) 27 November 2001 (27.11.2001), whole document.	1-12, 15-21
A	US 6,085,838 A (VERCAEMER et al) 11 July 2000 (11.07.2000), whole document.	1-12, 15-21
<input type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. <input type="checkbox"/> See patent family annex.		
* Special categories of cited documents:		
"A"	document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance	"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"E"	earlier application or patent published on or after the international filing date	"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
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"O"	document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means	"&" document member of the same patent family
"P"	document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed	
Date of the actual completion of the international search		Date of mailing of the international search report
12 March 2004 (12.03.2004)		13 JAN 2005
Name and mailing address of the ISA/US		Authorized officer
Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 Facsimile No. (703) 305-3230		David J. Bagnell <i>[Signature]</i> Telephone No. (703) 308-1113

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

PCT/US03/25716

Continuation of B. FIELDS SEARCHED Item 3:
Derwent, JPO, EPO

Terms: Thread, Stress concentrator, stress, expand/expanding, tubular, casing

CORRECTED VERSION

(19) World Intellectual Property
Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
18 March 2004 (18.03.2004)

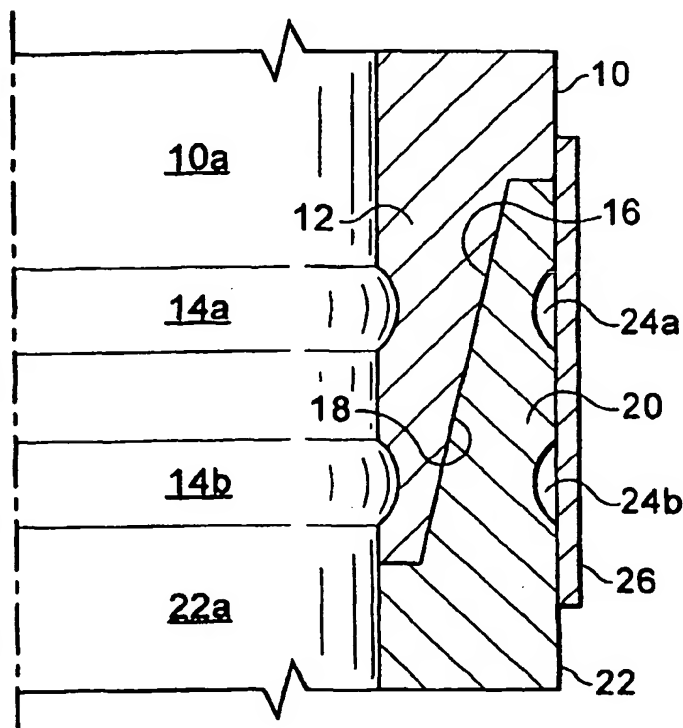
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— of inventorship (Rule 4.17(iv)) for US only

[Continued on next page]

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WO 2004/023014 A3

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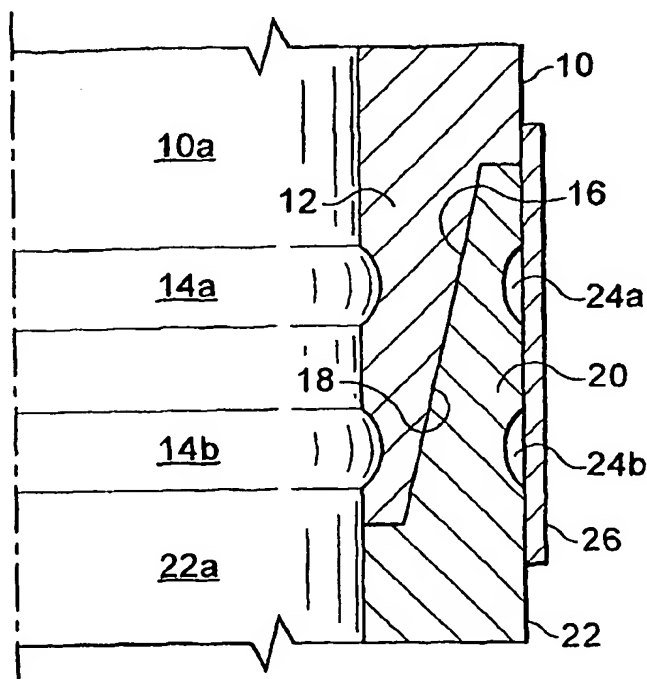
— with international search report
— with amended claims

(74) Agent: **MATTINGLY, Todd**; Haynes and Boone, LLP,
901 Main Street, Suite 3100, Dallas, TX 75202 (US).

(88) Date of publication of the international search report:
3 March 2005

[Continued on next page]

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WO 2004/023014 A3



Date of publication of the amended claims:

15 September 2005

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(15) Information about Corrections:

Previous Corrections:

see PCT Gazette No. 20/2005 of 19 May 2005, Section II

see PCT Gazette No. 41/2004 of 7 October 2004, Section II

AMENDED CLAIMS

received by the International Bureau on 07 March 2005 :
claims 1 to 21 are unchanged, claims 22 to 48 are new

1. An assembly, comprising:
a first tubular member comprising external threads; and
a second tubular member comprising internal threads coupled to the external threads of
the first tubular member;
wherein at least one of the first and second tubular members define one or more stress
concentrators.
2. The assembly of claim 1, further comprising:
an external sleeve coupled to and overlapping with the ends of the first and second
tubular members.
3. The assembly of claim 1, wherein one or more of the stress concentrators comprise
surface grooves formed in the surfaces of at least one of the first and second tubular members.
4. The assembly of claim 1, wherein the stress concentrators are defined above the internal
and external threads of the first and second tubular members.
5. A method for forming a wellbore casing, comprising:
positioning the assembly of claim 1 within a borehole that traverses a subterranean
formation; and
radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole.
6. A method for forming a wellbore casing, comprising:
positioning the assembly of claim 2 within a borehole that traverses a subterranean
formation; and
radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole.
7. A method for forming a wellbore casing, comprising:
positioning the assembly of claim 3 within a borehole that traverses a subterranean
formation; and
radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole.
8. A method for forming a wellbore casing, comprising:
positioning the assembly of claim 4 within a borehole that traverses a subterranean
formation; and
radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole.

9. An apparatus, comprising:
 - a wellbore that traverses a subterranean formation; and
 - a wellbore casing positioned within and coupled to the wellbore;
 - wherein the wellbore casing is coupled to the wellbore by a process comprising:
 - positioning the assembly of claim 1 within the wellbore; and
 - radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the wellbore.
10. An apparatus, comprising:
 - a wellbore that traverses a subterranean formation; and
 - a wellbore casing positioned within and coupled to the wellbore;
 - wherein the wellbore casing is coupled to the wellbore by a process comprising:
 - positioning the assembly of claim 2 within the wellbore; and
 - radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the wellbore.
11. An apparatus, comprising:
 - a wellbore that traverses a subterranean formation; and
 - a wellbore casing positioned within and coupled to the wellbore;
 - wherein the wellbore casing is coupled to the wellbore by a process comprising:
 - positioning the assembly of claim 3 within the wellbore; and
 - radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the wellbore.
12. An apparatus, comprising:
 - a wellbore that traverses a subterranean formation; and
 - a wellbore casing positioned within and coupled to the wellbore;
 - wherein the wellbore casing is coupled to the wellbore by a process comprising:
 - positioning the assembly of claim 4 within the wellbore; and
 - radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the wellbore.
15. A system for forming a wellbore casing, comprising:
 - means for positioning the assembly of claim 1 within a borehole that traverses a subterranean formation; and
 - means for radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole.
16. A system for forming a wellbore casing, comprising:
 - means for positioning the assembly of claim 2 within a borehole that traverses a subterranean formation; and

means for radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole.

17. A system for forming a wellbore casing, comprising:
 - means for positioning the assembly of claim 3 within a borehole that traverses a subterranean formation; and
 - means for radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole.
18. A system for forming a wellbore casing, comprising:
 - means for positioning the assembly of claim 4 within a borehole that traverses a subterranean formation; and
 - means for radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole.
19. A method of providing a fluid tight seal between a pair of overlapping tubular members, comprising:
 - forming one or more stress concentrators within at least one of the tubular members;
 - and
 - radially expanding and plastically deforming the tubular members.
20. The method of claim 19, wherein the tubular members are threadably coupled; and wherein the stress concentrators are formed above the threaded coupling.
21. The method of claim 19, wherein the stress concentrators comprise surface grooves formed in at least one of the tubular members.
22. An assembly, comprising:
 - a first tubular member comprising external threads;
 - a second tubular member comprising internal threads coupled to the external threads of the first tubular member; and
 - an external sleeve coupled to and overlapping with the ends of the first and second tubular members;wherein at least one of the first and second tubular members define one or more stress concentrators.
23. The assembly of claim 22, wherein one or more of the stress concentrators comprise surface grooves formed in the surfaces of at least one of the first and second tubular members.
24. The assembly of claim 22, wherein the stress concentrators are defined above the

internal and external threads of the first and second tubular members.

25. A method for forming a wellbore casing, comprising:
positioning an assembly within a borehole that traverses a subterranean formation; and
radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole;
wherein the assembly comprises:
a first tubular member comprising external threads;
a second tubular member comprising internal threads coupled to the external threads of
the first tubular member; and
an external sleeve coupled to and overlapping with the ends of the first and second
tubular members;
wherein at least one of the first and second tubular members define one or more stress
concentrators.
26. An apparatus, comprising:
a wellbore that traverses a subterranean formation; and
a wellbore casing positioned within and coupled to the wellbore;
wherein the wellbore casing is coupled to the wellbore by a process comprising:
positioning an assembly within a borehole that traverses a subterranean formation; and
radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole;
wherein the assembly comprises:
a first tubular member comprising external threads;
a second tubular member comprising internal threads coupled to the external threads of
the first tubular member; and
an external sleeve coupled to and overlapping with the ends of the first and second
tubular members;
wherein at least one of the first and second tubular members define one or more stress
concentrators.
27. A system for forming a wellbore casing, comprising:
means for positioning an assembly within a borehole that traverses a subterranean
formation; and
means for radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole;
wherein the assembly comprises:
a first tubular member comprising external threads;
a second tubular member comprising internal threads coupled to the external threads of
the first tubular member; and

an external sleeve coupled to and overlapping with the ends of the first and second tubular members;
wherein at least one of the first and second tubular members define one or more stress concentrators.

28. An assembly, comprising:
a first tubular member comprising external threads; and
a second tubular member comprising internal threads coupled to the external threads of the first tubular member;
wherein the first and second tubular members each define one or more stress concentrators.
29. The assembly of claim 28, further comprising:
an external sleeve coupled to and overlapping with the ends of the first and second tubular members.
30. The assembly of claim 28, wherein one or more of the stress concentrators comprise surface grooves formed in the surfaces of at least one of the first and second tubular members.
31. The assembly of claim 28, wherein the stress concentrators are defined above the internal and external threads of the first and second tubular members.
32. A method for forming a wellbore casing, comprising:
positioning the assembly of claim 28 within a borehole that traverses a subterranean formation; and
radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole.
33. A method for forming a wellbore casing, comprising:
positioning the assembly of claim 29 within a borehole that traverses a subterranean formation; and
radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole.
34. A method for forming a wellbore casing, comprising:
positioning the assembly of claim 30 within a borehole that traverses a subterranean formation; and
radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole.

35. A method for forming a wellbore casing, comprising:
positioning the assembly of claim 31 within a borehole that traverses a subterranean formation; and
radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole.
36. An apparatus, comprising:
a wellbore that traverses a subterranean formation; and
a wellbore casing positioned within and coupled to the wellbore;
wherein the wellbore casing is coupled to the wellbore by a process comprising:
positioning the assembly of claim 28 within the wellbore; and
radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the wellbore.
37. An apparatus, comprising:
a wellbore that traverses a subterranean formation; and
a wellbore casing positioned within and coupled to the wellbore;
wherein the wellbore casing is coupled to the wellbore by a process comprising:
positioning the assembly of claim 29 within the wellbore; and
radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the wellbore.
38. An apparatus, comprising:
a wellbore that traverses a subterranean formation; and
a wellbore casing positioned within and coupled to the wellbore;
wherein the wellbore casing is coupled to the wellbore by a process comprising:
positioning the assembly of claim 30 within the wellbore; and
radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the wellbore.
39. An apparatus, comprising:
a wellbore that traverses a subterranean formation; and
a wellbore casing positioned within and coupled to the wellbore;
wherein the wellbore casing is coupled to the wellbore by a process comprising:
positioning the assembly of claim 31 within the wellbore; and
radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the wellbore.
40. A system for forming a wellbore casing, comprising:
means for positioning the assembly of claim 28 within a borehole that traverses a subterranean formation; and
means for radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole.

41. A system for forming a wellbore casing, comprising:
 - means for positioning the assembly of claim 29 within a borehole that traverses a subterranean formation; and
 - means for radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole.
42. A system for forming a wellbore casing, comprising:
 - means for positioning the assembly of claim 30 within a borehole that traverses a subterranean formation; and
 - means for radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole.
43. A system for forming a wellbore casing, comprising:
 - means for positioning the assembly of claim 31 within a borehole that traverses a subterranean formation; and
 - means for radially expanding and plastically deforming the assembly within the borehole.
44. A method of providing a fluid tight seal between a pair of overlapping tubular members, comprising:
 - forming one or more stress concentrators within each of the tubular members; and
 - radially expanding and plastically deforming the tubular members.
45. The method of claim 44, wherein the tubular members are threadably coupled; and wherein the stress concentrators are formed above the threaded coupling.
46. The method of claim 44, wherein the stress concentrators comprise surface grooves formed in at least one of the tubular members.
47. A method of providing a fluid tight seal between a pair of overlapping tubular members, comprising:
 - concentrating compressive stresses onto the overlapping portions of the tubular members; and
 - radially expanding and plastically deforming the tubular members.
48. The method of claim 47, wherein the tubular members are threadably coupled; and wherein the compressive stresses are concentrated onto the threaded coupling during the radial expansion and plastic deformation.